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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4125th meeting of the Security Council, held on 7 April 2000 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the report of the Secretary-General concerning the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security of 10 March 2000 (A/54/791-S/2000/205).

"The Security Council reiterates its grave concern at the continued Afghan conflict, which is a serious and growing threat to regional and international peace and security. It strongly condemns the Taliban for the launching of new offensives, most notably that of 1 March 2000. The Council expresses its deep concern at the reports that both parties to the conflict are preparing for renewed large-scale fighting and recalls its repeated demands that the Afghan parties cease fighting. These events add to the enormous suffering of the civilian population of Afghanistan.

"The Security Council reiterates that there is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan and that only a negotiated political settlement aimed at the establishment of a broad-based, multi-ethnic and fully representative government acceptable to all Afghans can lead to peace and national reconciliation. It notes that the United Front of Afghanistan is willing to talk with the Taliban and recalls its demand that the parties, in particular the Taliban, resume negotiations under United Nations auspices without delay and preconditions in full compliance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Council.

"The Security Council calls upon all Afghan parties to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and to ensure the full and unhindered access of international humanitarian assistance and personnel to all those in need. It expresses its grave concern at the further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan as a result of ongoing hostilities. The Taliban has the primary responsibility for this.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the Taliban for the repeated forced entries on 26, 27 and 29 March 2000 by its armed groups into and searches of the United Nations premises in Kandahar and for the intimidation of the United Nations personnel. It stresses that responsibility for the

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subsequent withdrawal of all international staff from Kandahar and suspension of humanitarian assistance activities in southern Afghanistan rests solely with the Taliban. The Council demands that the Taliban stop these unacceptable practices and ensure the safety and security of all United Nations and associated personnel and humanitarian personnel working in Afghanistan in accordance with international law.

"The Security Council stresses its grave concern at the human rights situation in Afghanistan, which is unacceptable. It expresses particular alarm at the continuing disregard by the Taliban of the concerns expressed by the international community. The Council strongly condemns the forced displacement of the civilian population, notably that conducted by the Taliban in 1999, the deliberate targeting of civilians and the destruction of their assets and means of survival, summary executions, arbitrary detention of civilians and forced labour of those in detention, the separation of men from their families, indiscriminate bombing and other violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. It calls upon all Afghan parties, especially the Taliban, to put an end to such practices and to ensure the protection of civilians.

"The Security Council reaffirms the principle of non-refoulement of refugees, as provided for in relevant instruments of international law, welcomes recent efforts of countries neighbouring Afghanistan to support the voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees in safety and dignity, and urges those host States to continue to provide international protection to Afghan refugees in need of it. It encourages the international community to provide the necessary assistance in this regard.

"The Security Council condemns the continuing grave violations of the human rights of women and girls, including all forms of discrimination against them, in all areas of Afghanistan, particularly in areas under the control of the Taliban. It remains deeply concerned about continued restrictions on their access to health care, to education and to employment outside the home, and about restrictions on their freedom of movement and freedom from intimidation, harassment and violence. The Council notes the recent reports of modest progress regarding the access of women and girls to certain services, but considers that such incremental improvements, while welcome, still fall far short of the minimum expectations of the international community, and calls upon all parties, particularly the Taliban, to take measures to end all violations of human rights of women and girls.

"The Security Council reiterates that outside interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, including the involvement of foreign combatants and military personnel and the supply of weapons and other materials used in the conflict, should cease immediately. It calls upon all States to take resolute measures to prohibit their military personnel from planning and participating in combat operations in Afghanistan, and immediately to withdraw their personnel and to assure that the supply of ammunition and other war-making materials is halted. The Council expresses its deep concern at the continuing involvement in the fighting in Afghanistan, on the side of the Taliban forces, of thousands of non-Afghan nationals.

"The Security Council reiterates its position that the United Nations must continue to play its central and impartial role in international efforts towards a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict. It welcomes the appointment of a new Personal Representative of the Secretary-General and the activities of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA) to facilitate a political process aimed at achieving a lasting political settlement to the conflict. The Council supports the phased deployment of the UNSMA Civil Affairs Unit inside Afghanistan, as the security conditions permit.

"The Security Council welcomes the renewed commitment of members of the 'Six plus Two' group to contribute to a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict in support of the efforts of the United Nations, and urges the members of the group and the Afghan parties to implement the Tashkent Declaration on Fundamental Principles for a Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict in Afghanistan (A/54/174-S/1999/812, annex), particularly the agreement of members of the group not to provide military support to any Afghan party and to prevent the use of their territories for such purposes.

"The Security Council expresses its appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, in support of and in coordination with the United Nations, to facilitate the convening of negotiations between the two Afghan parties. It encourages the process launched in Rome to convene a loya jirgah in Afghanistan and acknowledges other recent efforts to promote peace in Afghanistan, such as those of the Cyprus group and the meeting in Tokyo.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the continuing use of Afghan territory, especially areas controlled by the Taliban, for the sheltering and training of terrorists and planning of terrorist acts, and reaffirms its conviction that the suppression of international terrorism is essential for the maintenance of international peace and security. It insists that the Taliban cease the provision of sanctuary and training for international terrorists and their organizations, take effective measures to ensure that the territory under its control is not used for terrorist installations and camps or for the preparation or organization of terrorist acts against other States or their citizens, and cooperate with efforts to bring indicted terrorists to justice.

"The Security Council demands once again that the Taliban turn over indicted terrorist Usama bin Laden to appropriate authorities as set out in its resolution 1267 (1999) of 15 October 1999. It stresses that the continued failure of the Taliban to comply with this demand is unacceptable. The Council will ensure effective implementation of the measures imposed by that resolution. It condemns the recent attacks and planned attacks by terrorists affiliated with Usama bin Laden which constitute a continuing threat to the international community.

"The Security Council reiterates that the capture by the Taliban of the Consulate-General of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the murder of the Iranian diplomats and journalist in Mazar-e-Sharif as well as the murders of the United Nations personnel constitute flagrant violations of international law. It expresses its concern at the failure of the Taliban effectively to bring to justice those responsible for these crimes. The Council reiterates its demand that the Taliban cooperate fully with the United Nations in this regard.

"The Security Council is deeply disturbed by an alarming increase in the cultivation, production and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan, especially in areas controlled by the Taliban, and by its consequences for the continuation of the conflict. It demands that the Taliban, as well as others, halt all illegal drugs activities. The Council encourages the initiative of the 'Six plus Two' group to address the drug-related issues in a coordinated manner with the support of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention. It also encourages Member States and others concerned to increase their support for the efforts aimed at strengthening the drug control capacities of countries bordering Afghanistan.

"The Security Council stresses the need for prompt and effective implementation by all Member States of the measures imposed by its resolution 1267 (1999), and reminds Member States of their obligations under this resolution, including assisting in the identification of Taliban assets and aircraft. It underlines that sanctions are not aimed at the Afghan people, but are imposed against the Taliban because of its non-compliance with that resolution. The Council reaffirms its decision to assess the impact, including the humanitarian implications, of the measures imposed by that resolution. It encourages the Committee established pursuant to its resolution 1267 (1999) to report in this respect as soon as practicable.

"The Security Council holds the leadership of the Taliban responsible for not taking measures to comply with the demands made in its resolutions, especially to conclude a ceasefire and to resume negotiations, and stresses the need for the Taliban to comply with these demands without delay.

"In this context the Security Council reaffirms its readiness to consider the imposition of further targeted measures, in accordance with its responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations, with the aim of achieving the full implementation of all its relevant resolutions."